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Basketball Team (1974-1979)

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CLASS OF 2017 INDUCTEE

Anne Grover (Botica)

ATHLETE, VOLLEYBALL

Anne Grover (Botica) spent most of her student life on the volleyball courts playing the sport she loved, so it was no surprise when she channeled her passion into becoming a coach.

From 1994 to 1998, Botica dominated the local high school volleyball scene while playing for St. Joseph’s High School. She played on Team Ontario for four years, serving as the captain her final year. She also played in the 1997 Canada Games, was all-city for four years, and won numerous Ontario Volleyball Association All-Star awards.

In 1998, Botica’s dream became a reality when she was offered a full-ride volleyball scholarship to Ohio State University. Her team had four straight NCAA appearances, finishing as high as 12th in the United States. At the Buckeye Invitational in 2000 Botica became a co-record holder at Ohio State. She was the fourth Ohio State player in history to serve seven aces in a match. In 2001, she was an all Big Ten member, preseason all Big Ten Squad member, and was one of twelve players chosen for the Midwest All-region Squad. Botica ended her Ohio State career ranked 10th in career kills, 12th in career aces and 17th in hitting.

In 2002, Botica was signed to play professionally for the Chicago Thunder but the team folded prior to the start of the season. Botica decided it was time to take the leap into coaching. She started off her collegiate coaching career working at Ohio University, where she helped lead the girls’ volleyball team to back to back MAC conference titles and to NCAA appearances from 2003 to 2005.

In 2008, Botica coached the Durham Attack Club U17 team to a provincial and national volleyball championship. In 2009, she was inducted into the St. Joseph’s hall of fame.

Botica has truly shone in the sport of volleyball both as a player and a coach. She attributes her success to coaches Dean O’Connell, Lionel Woods and Jim Stone.



CLASS OF 2017 INDUCTEE

Brittany Hedderson

ATHLETE, BASKETBALL

Brittany Hedderson was drawn to sports at an early age. With a combination of her late grandmother's love of sports, passed on through her father – and her late grandfather Bernard Newman's dedication to sport passed on through her mother, it's no surprise Hedderson's first passion was sport. Her older brother Ryan, also an avid athlete, taught her how to "be tough" both on and off the court.

Early in her basketball career, it was clear to Hedderson was going to be a force to be reckoned with. The five-foot-nine guard for St. Anne's High School had an impressive record from 2004-to 2008 playing under mentor and coach Andy Kiss. In her senior year she helped lead her team to a 46-7 record – leading in points, rebounds, assists, free throws, and shooting percentage. As St. Anne's captain, she led the team to gold at the OFSAA AAAA basketball championships in 2007. She also holds the school record for points in a game with 39.

Hedderson was named first-team All-Canadian and Miss Basketball Ontario in 2008. She played for three years on the Ontario Provincial Basketball Team. She was also just the sixth player to win the Royal Arcanum Award twice in her career – given to the best athlete in WECSSAA.

Following numerous recruitment offers, Hedderson signed with the University of Buffalo Bulls in 2008. During her first year, she played in all 32 games, leading the team with 106 assists and 43 starts. By the end of her university career, Hedderson had left her mark.

Total career highlights included ranking fourth in scoring (1,462), fourth in field goals (555), third in three-point field goals (161), and eighth in assists (311). Hedderson ended her career as one of only two players in school history to record 1,400 points and 300 assists.

In 2012, Hedderson took her basketball to the next level. She was invited to the WNBA Combine in Denver, Colorado where she signed with M&K Sports and Entertainment. She played in Thailand for a season, before signing with Turku Riento – a professional basketball team in Finland. Sadly, Hedderson was sidelined by a torn Achilles after just one season.



CLASS OF 2017 INDUCTEE

Jerry Kauric

ATHLETE, FOOTBALL

Jerry Kauric was born in Windsor. A graduate of Kennedy High School, he is one of the few local football players who successfully made it to the National Football League (NFL).

Kauric honed his kicking talents with the Windsor AKO Fratmen in the Canadian Junior Football League. He was signed by the Edmonton Eskimos of the Canadian Football League (CFL), where he spent four seasons. It was in Kauric's first season with the Eskimos in 1987 that he achieved his greatest accomplishment. In the CFL Championship, he kicked the game winning field goal, clinching the Grey Cup for the Eskies.

Kauric spent three more seasons with Edmonton before playing for one year with the Calgary Stampeders. He was a CFL West All-Star in 1988.

In 1990 he spent his only season in the NFL with the Cleveland Browns.

The Windsor/Essex Sports Hall of Fame is honoured to welcome Jerry Kauric into his deserved place in the athlete category.



CLASS OF 2017 INDUCTEE

Todd Nadon

ATHLETE, BOXING

Todd Nadon was born in Edmonton. He moved to Windsor at eight years of age, having already begun boxing with his father as his first tutor in Alexandria, Ontario. Nadon attended John McCrae Elementary School, Edith Cavell Junior High, and Brennan High School, before going on to the University of Windsor and the University of San Francisco.

The left handed slugger received an education of a different sort across the river when he joined the famous Kronk Gym as a sparring partner for Tommy Hearns in his preparation to fight Ron Roldan, under the tutelage of Emmanuel Steward. He was the first Canadian to fight under the Kronk Boxing Team banner.

Nadon is the only Canadian fighter to hold the International Boxing Organization’s World Super Middleweight title. Nadon TKOed Willie Ball in the twelfth round for the crown in St. Louis in 1992 in a much-anticipated rematch of their fight earlier that year in which Ball won the IBO Jr World Title fight when the referee was forced to turn to the score cards.

The southpaw vigorously defended his home turf, going 4-0-1 in Windsor matches. All told, Nadon finished his professional boxing career with a 14-5-1 record, knocking out six foes, and boxing a total of 106 rounds.

Nadon’s stellar professional career followed an impressive run as an amateur boxer. In the decades between 1972 and 1988, Nadon captured Five US Golden Gloves tournament crowns. He was also selected to fight for his country at the 1988 Seoul Olympics but was unable to participate due to an injury. Nadon’s remarkable career is representative of Windsor’s proud boxing tradition.



CLASS OF 2017 INDUCTEE

Joanne Rothery

ATHLETE, TRACK & FIELD

Joanne Rothery graduated from W.C. Kennedy High School in 1984 as a heavily decorated track and field athlete. In the midget girls division, Rothery established the Ontario record of 12.25m in the shot put in 1981 – a record that lasted more than 20 years. She continued to excel at shot put, becoming OFSAA champion in her graduating year of 1984 with a mark of 13.96m. Demonstrating diversity, Rothery was also the SWOSSA champion that year in the discus with a throw of 44.42m.

As a standout in her sports, Rothery caught the attention of recruiters south of the border and committed to Oklahoma State University (OSU). In a case of local-girl-makes good, Rothery was a star at OSU. She broke the record at the University of Oklahoma Invitational Meet in shot put with an impressive mark of 14.42m in 1985. The next year, Rothery set the meet record on her way to the title in discus with a throw of 40.56 at the Big Eight Outdoor Championship. With those lofty achievements to her credit, Rothery lettered in 1985 and 1986.

Rothery returned to Canada to continue her education at the University of Saskatchewan. While in Saskatoon, Rothery continued her dominance in sport. She was a two-time All Canadian.

Rothery has since returned home to Windsor-Essex, where she remains an influential person in the Windsor-Essex sporting landscape. In 2014, Rothery received a WESPY Legacy Award.



CLASS OF 2017 INDUCTEE

Alice Bell

BUILDER, CURLING

Windsor’s Alice Bell knows a thing or two about curling.

She started curling at the Windsor Curling Club in 1962. She joined the Southern Ontario Ladies Curling Association (S.O.L.C.A.) shortly thereafter, serving as local district representative from 1983 to 1985 and became its president in 1988.

Bell and her local curling rink at the Windsor Curling Club won numerous awards during her career, setting a record for winning the coveted MIXED Walkerville Tankard seven years in a row. As a Course Conductor, Bell taught curlers how to teach curling. In 1988, Bell’s hard work and commitment to curling was recognized when she won the Honorary Lifetime Achievement award from the Ontario Curling Association.

But Bell wasn’t only a curler; she loved the sport and wanted to share it with everyone. From 1972 to 1976, she arranged to have the Turnbull Ursulak Curling School come to the Windsor Curling Club to teach two-day clinics. Anxious to step up her game, Bell became certified in coaching through Curl Canada, maintaining her accreditation from 1978 until 1987.

Bell became a leader in the Curl Canada’s Coaching Certification program where she trained hundreds of coaches for many years. She was also instrumental in providing training to other athletes in Europe. In 1986, she took her curling coaching to a new level when she was invited to teach in Switzerland at two summer curling camps. In 1984, Bell reached out to teams in Kingsville, Chatham, Leamington, Roseland and Windsor to bring together competitive curlers to play in a Ladies Major League.

Bell coached the Pam Leavitt Curling Team as they represented the province in Canada’s premier ladies curling championship, The Scott Tournament of Hearts. Bell was instrumental in bringing the playdowns for the Southern Ontario Tournament of Hearts to the Windsor Curling Club in 1987.

Bell also tackled the St. Clair College Curling Team, coaching them to a zone and regional win in 1989. The team went on to play in the Ontario finals in Ottawa.



CLASS OF 2017 INDUCTEE

Peter Cusumano

BUILDER, BASKETBALL

Few coaches have had the impact on the Windsor-Essex sport scene like Coach Cusumano. Cooz, as he’s commonly known, was schooled at St. Anne’s, St. Alexander, and Brennan before attending the University of Western Ontario and the University of Windsor. Cooz started his coaching career in 1980 at his alma mater, Brennan, before transitioning to Catholic Central in 1985. No matter the location, his athletes were successful.

Coaching boys and girls, Coach Cooz has been an encouraging voice on the sidelines of many sports – including cross country, track and field, football, and baseball. If one sport could be singled out, however, it would be basketball. Perhaps most telling is that twenty-nine of his players have achieved First-Team All City status, while on six occasions his former players have been named Mr. Basketball for Windsor.

In terms of team titles and tournament appearances, the list is too long to go through in detail. Most notably, Coach Cooz won more OFSAA medals for boys’ basketball than any coach in Windsor - Essex County with 7 total medals: 3 golds, 2 silvers and 2 bronze – all at the AAA level.

Cooz was happy to lend his expertise and administration skills to numerous athletic organizations. He was a convener for WSSAA, WECSAA, and OFSAA for basketball and soccer – both boys and girls divisions.

Cooz is also the founder of Core City Hoops, which provides basketball opportunities, tied in with educational and nutritional programs, for youths in Windsor.

Beyond the accomplishments of his athletes and teams, Cooz was awarded the OFSAA Leadership in Sport Award and the Ken Jaggs Community Award in 2002. He followed that up in 2003 with the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal and the Father Armstrong Award last year – an award granted by the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board.



CLASS OF 2017 INDUCTEE

Bob Weepers

BUILDER, BASKETBALL & ADMIN.

Bob Weepers was a lifelong resident of Windsor; he attended Patterson High School and graduated from the University of Windsor. While he played on numerous championship basketball teams, he is being remembered for his overall contribution to sports in the Windsor-Essex County area.

Weepers was the Intercollegiate Athletic Coordinator at St. Clair College for thirty-one years. During his time at St. Clair, he was the head coach of the women’s basketball team – guiding the team to two silver and two bronze medals in the Ontario Collegiate Athletic Association (OCAA). In 1980, he also coached the Windsor Ladies Basketball Association Juveniles to the Ontario Championship.

The St. Clair Athletic Department created the “Bob Weepers Sportsmanship Award” for varsity athletes who truly represent Weepers’ integrity and ethics.

Weepers served on the Board of Directors of the Windsor Essex County Sports Hall of Fame for many years. He was also known as one of the foremost sports historians in the region.

In 2001, he was the editor/researcher of the book, “We Are The Champions”. This book recognized all of the teams from Windsor/Essex County in the 20th century who won Canadian Championships.

Unfortunately, Bob Weepers passed away far too early in 2010.

As a person who dedicated his life to sport in the Windsor/Essex County area, Bob Weepers is well deserving of his place in the Windsor/Essex County Sports Hall of Fame in the Builders category.



EVENT AND TEAM

Riverside Bantam-Midget Holiday Hockey Tournament

EVENT RECOGNITION

The Riverside Bantam-Midget Holiday Hockey Tournament celebrated its 57th anniversary this past season.

The tournament, organized and run by the Riverside Minor Hockey Association, started in 1959 with 20 teams from Ontario and the United States. It is currently the oldest bantam tournament in Ontario. In 1989, the tournament added a European flair for the first time when a team from Kavesta, Sweden participated. Subsequent years saw teams come from Great Britain, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Kazakhstan, Latvia, and Russia in order to compete. European players are billeted with families from Riverside Minor Hockey.

Kazakhstan centre, Nik Antropov won tournament MVP honours in 1995. He went on to play in the National Hockey League (NHL) for Toronto, Atlanta, Winnipeg, and the New York Rangers.

Slovakian winger Richard Panik, was named the 2004 tournament MVP; he later played for the Windsor Spitfires, and is now playing for Chicago in the NHL.

The Windsor/Essex County Sports Hall of Fame is proud to recognize the Riverside Bantam-Midget Holiday Hockey Tournament for its long standing contribution to the sport of minor hockey.



EVENT AND TEAM

Windsor AKO Junior Men’s Basketball Team (1974-1979)

TEAM RECOGNITION

The Windsor AKO fraternity has a long and storied history in junior basketball. The first Canadian champions were the 1946-47 team, while the last was the 1979 team.

Under the coaching of Randy and Sam Sasso, AKO accomplished an amazing run of championship seasons. AKO won six consecutive Canadian championships from 1974 to 1979.

AKO won the E.W. Bowering Trophy, emblematic of the Canadian Junior Men’s Basketball Champions, for six consecutive years - the only team ever to accomplish this feat.

The first five AKO teams went undefeated in the Ontario and Canadian Championships, and the 1979 team had only one loss.

As a result of AKO winning six consecutive titles, all of the other provinces opted to discontinue competing, as they felt AKO was too dominant an opponent.

The Windsor/Essex Sports Hall of Fame is pleased to recognize Windsor AKO for their six consecutive Canadian Junior Men’s Basketball Championships.